



# The Ripline

[www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS/](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS/)

Issue 1

2000/2001

**NEWSLETTER OF THE BRISTOL UNIVERSITY HOT AIR BALLOONING SOCIETY**

Welcome to The Ripline, the BUHABS newsletter, which you can expect through your letter box every month (don't forget to tell us if you move!). Most of this issue is devoted to the technicalities of flying with BUHABS. New members should read this newsletter carefully and keep it for reference during the year. You don't need to know anything about ballooning or balloons, but it is important that you are familiar with our signing up process. I hope you enjoy this issue.

John Burnett

## WELCOME TO BUHABS

Welcome to BUHABS and the first edition of The Ripline newsletter for the year 2000. Student balloon clubs are few and far between and we are fortunate at Bristol University to have the biggest and most successful in the country. This is our fifteenth year of operation and I am the fifteenth pilot under training. If all goes well by the time you read this I will be a fully-fledged pilot, completing my training in a little over one-year. This year is my first year as President and I take over from Lee Hooper who, along with many others, has put a lot of effort into getting the club where it is today.

BUHABS has had an exciting summer. We have been to Italy with Bath and UWE balloon clubs, flown at the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, Northampton Balloon Festival and even entered the National Hot Air Ballooning Championships for the first time. As members you get more out of BUHABS the more effort you put in. If you just fly once then I hope you enjoy it, but I hope some of you will be tempted to crew, drive and fly regularly. There may be opportunities to come on a weekend away with us, have a holiday abroad or even learn to fly, but above all make the most of this year in Bristol. Whatever you do, seize the opportunity to have some fun flying with BUHABS!

Simon Jenkins



## BUHABS INTRODUCTORY TALK & SOCIAL NIGHT

**WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2000**

**8:00 PM - MR1 (BRUNEL SUITE), STUDENTS UNION BUILDING**

The beginning of this event will be a short slide show and talk to introduce ballooning and show what fun can be had. After this there will be time to mingle, as well as ask the committee any questions. We also hope to have the basket up for you to take a gander at. Also during this time there will be free alcoholic beverages and snacks on offer! Something you won't get from other societies! We will then go to the Union bar, the Epi, for a few drinks. For those who are up for it, we'll then be heading on a pub crawl into town and ending up in a club. This evening promises to be a right laugh (the BUHABS committee are renowned for their dancing skills). We look forward to seeing you there.

**FREE DRINKS FOR ALL MEMBERS!**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***When do we fly?***

With over 130 members each year, we attempt to fly every slot available. Balloons only fly early in the morning or late evening when the weather is calm. So our usual slots are; Saturday and Sunday, morning and evening. This does involve some early wake ups for morning slots and late returns for evening slots. As winter progresses, the 'phone in times become later in the morning and earlier in the evening. However, when summer approaches, be prepared to leave Bristol as early as 0500 for morning flights and return as late as 2200 on evening flights. We will be organising some trips during weekdays this year. If this is the case, the slots will be advertised on the notice board on the Thursday of the week before. If this is not possible (i.e. the weather looks promising for a flight the very next day), then e-mail will be used to advertise spaces. It is essential to note that we cannot guarantee that you will be back in time for early lectures from a morning flight, so we leave it to your own discretion if you want to sign up.

### ***What happens if I can't get to the main University area to sign up?***

Every year some members study/work away from the main University area of Tyndall Avenue. If this applies to you, then a separate sign up scheme applies. If you are not within the main University area, you should 'phone Simon Jenkins on Wednesday evening to request a slot. This also applies to BUHABS members studying at U.W.E. However, if you attend the University regularly in the main area you must use the Physics notice board. We will not accept people 'phoning up out of area reps because they couldn't be bothered to find the Physics notice board. I have drawn a lovely map, after all. This arrangement may be up for review in the future depending on demand.

### ***How many people go out on a trip?***

The BUHABS retrieval van carries eight people and the balloon. Out of those eight, one is a pilot and the other a driver. On some trips we may also have the PUT (trainee pilot) along. The driver must be over 21 years of age, approved and insured on the van, so it will be an experienced older club member who has been out ballooning a few times before. That said, if you are over 21 with a clean driving licence, you should get in touch with our Transport officer, Simon Church, once you have been out a few times and feel you may like to be a driver. If you have your own car, you will not be able to bring it with you, it should be parked at the Union.

### ***Where do BUHABS fly?***

We fly mainly in the Bristol/Bath and South Gloucestershire area. Balloons go exactly where the wind takes them, sometimes they even go over to Wales across the Bristol Channel. The van follows the balloon and arrives wherever the balloon lands to pick everyone up. How far we land from the road will dictate how much work we have to do to get the balloon back into the van.

### ***What Social things does the club do?***

There is a active social life in the club. Some of our members are regular clubbers, so can not only advise you on ballooning, but also which clubs in town offer the saddest music. All social events are advertised in The Ripline and via e-mail. Read about our first social for this year on the front page.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What does everyone do when they get to the launch site?**

When we fly, we usually have a crew consisting of a pilot, trainee pilot, a driver, and up to five or six others. There are various jobs to be done when launching the balloon, and once you have been out a few times you will have done them all. Two people hold open the mouth (base) of the balloon whilst cold air is blown in, after which the pilot will heat the air with a burner. Another two people are needed to pull on the crown line, a rope attached to the top of the balloon, in order to keep the balloon down until it is properly inflated. One person operates the inflation fan and others stand by to put their weight on the basket as the balloon comes upright.

### **What if I want to fly my boyfriend/girlfriend/parent/pet Godzilla?**

The basic answer is that you will not be able to. We have a commitment to our members to get them flown ASAP. Flying non-members and guests would make this task more difficult for us. However, the situation may change during holidays - sometimes with many students away spaces become available. We will discuss this in a later issue of The Ripline, but please do not pester pilots with such requests until we tell you it's okay. If whom you know is so keen to get airborne, they should join BUHABS. You should never sign anyone up on the notice board who is not a current member, -checks are made.

### **Why do I have to 'phone in no matter the weather?**

Last year we had some slots where we actually left in the dark and rain. Upon arrival to the launch field the clouds had broken and the sun was beaming through. So you can see it's essential to 'phone in. Going out the night before and drinking too much alcohol is not our problem, and failure to call will result in the docking of two crewing points.

### **How do I keep in touch with what is happening in BUHABS?**

The Ripline newsletter. This newsletter is the first of many that will be sent to you in the post, informing you of happenings in BUHABS. Every month The Ripline will bring you news of upcoming social events, reviews of past flights and hopefully a few laughs. It will not provide you with an accurate political comment on current affairs. You will also receive e-mails informing you of up-coming events. Also, check out our regularly updated website at [www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS/](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS/). We have had over 5000 hits since February 2000!

### **e-mail**

Every student has access to e-mail. Most new students need to register with the Computing Service for this facility. Most Halls of Residence now have computer access terminals in each individual room. All are connected to the University network. You will be added to the BUHABS mailing list if you know your e-mail address at the beginning of term. Otherwise, to add yourself, simply send a message to [majordomo@bris.ac.uk](mailto:majordomo@bris.ac.uk). All you need to say is 'Subscribe BUHABS', a message will be returned to you telling you about the mailing list. Using e-mail will increase your chances of flying, especially when weekday flights may be advertised with only a few hours notice. We therefore recommend you get fully acquainted with this essential facility.

## THE BALLOONING CHECKLIST

In order to simplify matters, here is a quick guide to going ballooning with BUHABS.

(Note that if you are outside the main University, a different system applies - refer to earlier pages.)



Pay a visit to the Physics Notice board as soon as possible after 1:15 pm on Thursday. The list is subsequently removed at 1:15 pm on Friday, so you have 24 hours to sign up.



Sign your name in your preferred slot. Only one slot is allowed per person, but you may sign again on Friday if slots remain unfilled. If you sign up another club member other than yourself, YOU will be penalised if they fail to 'phone in, so beware! Please do not sign in the driver's slot if you are new to the club or are not an approved driver, the approved drivers know who they are.



Take a note of the EXACT day and time of the pilot you have to call along with the 'phone number of the pilot.



When the day of the flight arrives, give the pilot a bell at the exact time noted. The 'phone may be engaged while others call in, be persistent or use BT's very useful ring-back facility. It is vital you call in, even if the weather is appalling, you will lose two crewing points if you fail to call. Continual failure to call will result in so many negative crewing points you may never get to fly.



If the decision is to go, you will need to meet at the Union building at the time stated by the pilot (usually 30 - 60 minutes after the 'phone in). Pick ups can be arranged if you live a long way from the Union, from Stoke Bishop Halls or 'The Arches' for example.



You need to bring the following;

**12 of your English Pounds, in cash or cheque form; Suitable clothing (long sleeved jumper/sweater); Suitable footwear for retrieving in muddy West Country fields; Money for Breakfast/Drinks on the way home; An optional bottle of Bubbly to celebrate after!**



The trip will go to a launch site chosen by the pilot. The entire outing will take 4-5 hours, and you will later be dropped off from where you were picked up.



You will gain one crewing point if you 'retrieve' (stay on the ground and help) and lose one point if you fly. This way everyone gets to fly on at least 50% of their trips, as selection is done on points. In cases where everyone is on equal points Mr. Spellward's patented 'Shortest Blade of Grass' draw takes place on the launch field.

I would like to thank Will Temple, whose previous issue of The Ripline formed the basis for parts of this edition. If you have any comments, queries, or quarrels with The Ripline (or if you feel like flexing your literary talents and writing an article yourself!) please don't hesitate to email me (John Burnett) at the following address: [REDACTED]

# NEWSLINE

OUT OF DATE BALLOONING NEWS PLAGIARISED HERE FIRST



## RECORD BALLOON STACK

On July 04 2000, Tesco's proved that it wasn't just shelves that they stack to a great height. A 110-ft special shape and a standard balloon took-off from Ashton Court. The balloons ascended at 0600 and completed the stack at 208 feet as they drifted north towards Filton. Both of the craft were built by Cameron Balloons of Bedminster, and were flown by pilots from Bristol.

The trolley special shape could also be seen at this year's International Balloon Fiesta at Ashton Court, which is sponsored by Tesco.

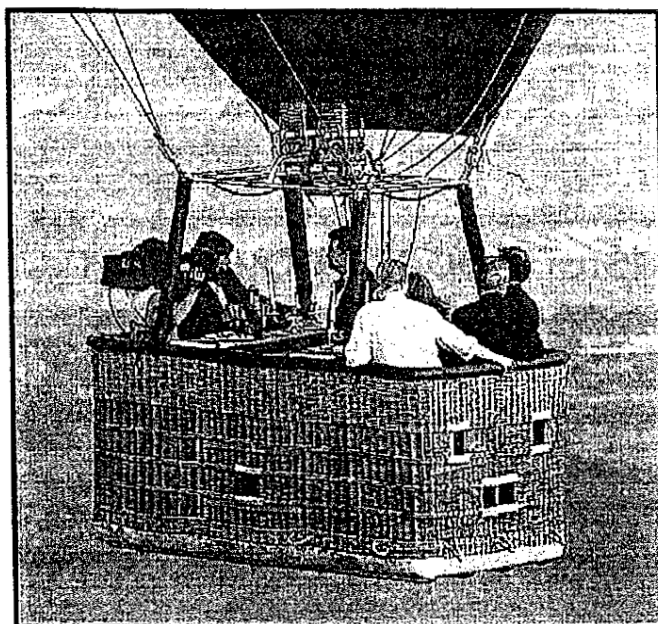
## SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCHES HOT AIR BALLOON ABOVE ATMOSPHERE

In September, the latest Space Shuttle mission had an interesting task. NASA had been commissioned by an unknown benefactor to release a Balloon in space. The passengers, who paid well above standard commercial rates, were said to enjoy spectacular views. One man shouted 'I can see my house from here'. Another passenger said she found it difficult to breathe. They managed a safe decent, but had the misfortune to land in the Sahara Desert.

Reports that Darth Vader is considering this technique for more efficient Storm Trooper deployment, are currently unfounded.

## LIVING UP THE HIGH LIFE

In late July, balloonists Brian Jones, Ian Ashpole and Andy Elson enjoyed dinner in a hot air balloon, at 1000ft! After taking off from Ashton Court they tre to such delights as chicken fondu with chilli sauce, and all this while floating over Bristol. Well, it's alright for some isn't it? This flight was also a stunt to publicise this year's International Balloon Fiesta.



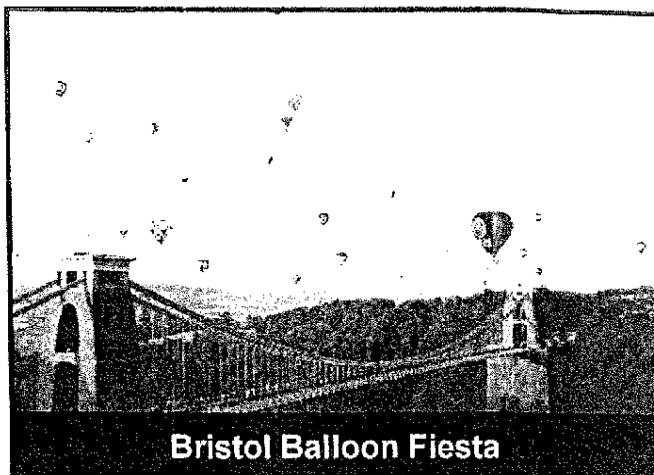
## SUMMER 2000 WITH BUHABS

The summer is always the busiest time for BUHABS, and this year was certainly no exception. As well as continuing to fly on a regular basis, BUHABS also went to several weekend events across the country.

The most famous event is the International Balloon Fiesta at Ashton Court in August. It is ranked as one of the top five outdoor events in the U.K. Over a hundred balloons take-off morning and evening all weekend, if the weather is suitable. There is also the spectacular Night Glow on the Thursday before, where you can also catch the top quality GWRfm concert (!). Mind you, I do jest, but Louise Nurdling played this year(?).

In early July some BUHABS members went on a trip to Todi, Italy. They had a fantastic time, flying every morning and evening, sometimes twice! You can look forward to an article about this event by Simon Jenkins next issue.

In mid July BUHABS went to an extreme adventure sports weekend in Shepton Mallet, which you can read about on the next page.



**Bristol Balloon Fiesta**

During August we competed in the Northampton Balloon Championships. This lasted a week and several BUHABS members went along.

If you find by next summer you can heave yourself out of bed early in the morning, you too could find yourself attending events like these.

## BUHABS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee is elected at the AGM to help run the club. These fine people can be contacted using the details below, please try to direct any inquiries to a relevant person. Non urgent enquiries should be via e-mail, however 'phone calls are welcome in some cases, such as illness the night before you are due to fly. If you change your address, please contact our membership secretary Tim Locke.

**SIMON JENKINS**

PRESIDENT & PILOT (P.U.T.)

**TIM LOCKE**

TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

**PETER DAVIES**

SECRETARY & PILOT (P.U.T.)

**JOHN BURNETT**

SOCIAL SECRETARY & 'THE RIPLINE' AND WEBSITE EDITOR

**SIMON CHURCH**

TRANSPORT OFFICER

**PAUL SPELLWARD**

FLYING TREASURER

**LEE HOOPER**

PILOT

**TIM DUDMAN**

PILOT

## NATIONAL ADVENTURE SPORTS WEEKEND

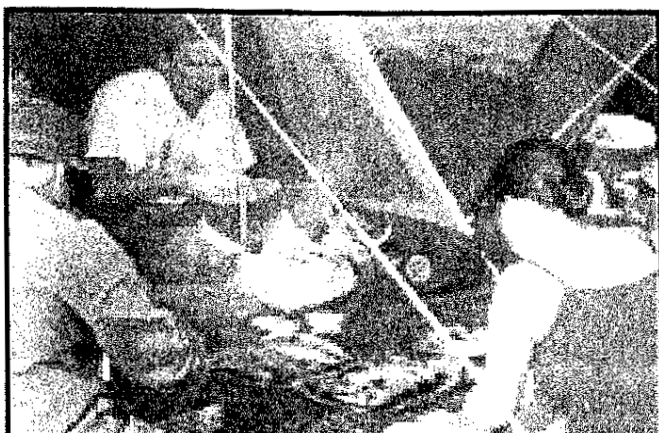
JULY 22/23 2000 - SHEPTON MALLET, SOMERSET

MEMBERS PRESENT; TIM DUDMAN, LIZ FARMER, LIL JAYAWARDHANA, ROB HOUSTON, SYLVIA WASKIEWICZ, RACHEL HARRINGTON, JOHN BURNETT AND LEE HOOPER.

There is nothing like milking a joke to the end, and it is fair to say we had an **extreme** weekend. What with **extreme** Kiwi fruit, **extreme** Zorbing, **extreme** yokel rappers and an **extreme** Night Glow, what am I to do?

The drive down on Friday evening took longer than expected due to Bristol migrating to Weston for the weekend, but we did have a pretty drive over the Mendips. When we arrived there was considerable confusion over where we were to camp. After finding what we thought was the right place, we got on our high horses and told loads of ravers who were in our field to leave. We were, er, wrong, and had to move to the right field rather sheepishly.

On Saturday morning we took a gander at what this event had to offer. We

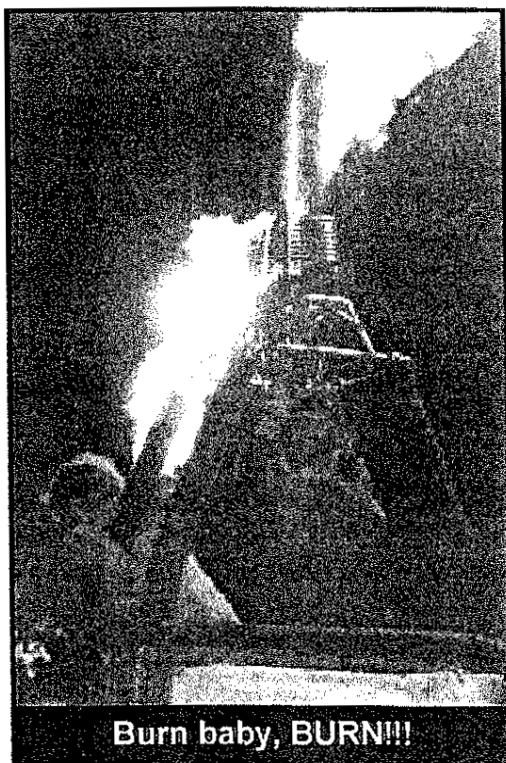


**Extreme barbeque, dude**

ended up on a free food hunt. We managed to gather 21 Kiwi fruit, 22 small boxes of Action Man cereal and many chocolate fish from various stalls. We were also introduced to the sport of

Zorbing, and its brother, Hydro-Zorbing. Sounds like something from Flash Gordon to me.

Jet skiing antics on a lake ended up being the afternoon's entertainment. Music was supplied by some local Shepton Mallet Rappers. They certainly believed they came from Brooklyn, and were often sending out messages to their homies in Somerset. After that, a trip to Tesco was in order. Once the yokels had been braved we walked out with a top barbeque for the evening.



**Burn baby, BURN!!!**

The Night Glow, arranged by Lee was very extreme. We had eight baskets (too windy for the balloons) blasting their burners to music. The retrieve vans didn't want to be left out, so they flashed their lights and

hazards as well. Totally extreme dude. The audience of twenty was in such rapture that they left after ten minutes. Afterwards we retired to one crew's camper van for a few beers and rounds of extreme Connect 4. I won Rachel, the first game was not a practice!

Swatch  
BOYS TOYS

**NASW 2000**

Event Personnel Pass



Even though we were unable to fly we all had a top weekend. However, every cloud has a silver lining. We were still paid expenses for the two days, which covered our barbeque, the night glow, and even left us with some profit each!

John Burnett  
Photos by Rob Houston

## KREK WAITER'S PEAK BRISTLE (USEFUL SANES FROM WESS VINGLUN)

Many new members to BUHABS may also be new to Bristol and the West Country. The following is a guide to the correct way to speak in a Bristol accent. This could come in very useful when having to deal with farmers, or the next time you go to buy your gross rees in 'Artelef or Sowfmeed.

**Angry Neighed:** Small bombshell, requiring the removal of a pin.

**Best Tie Can:** Don't expect more.

**Blood Yell:** Exclamation of suprise.

**Bone Arrows:** Required for archery.

**Dire Eel:** Caused by dysentry.

**Ghost Ray Tome:** What to do after school.

**Limp Picks:** Recently held in Sydney.

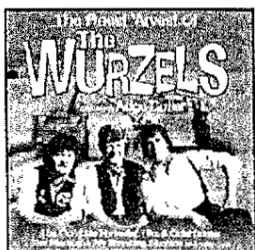
**Log Reds:** Conflict.

**Munce:** Usually last four or so weeks.

**Neck Store:** Neighbouring.

**Nurse Gnome:** Posh hospital, usually for the elderly.

**Pine Chips:** As opposed to Fish & Chips.



If you want some West Country tongue to listen to, you can dive to the same depths of sadness as myself and purchase this delightful album. A recent re-release by EMI for less than eight quid, it includes all the Wurzel classics including 'The Combine Harvester' and 'I am a Cider Drinker'. The Wurzels are having a bit of a revival at the moment, and you may get a chance to see them live, in such salubrious venues as Kenn Valley Social Club.

**Gnashed Ray:** Where to put spent cigarettes.

**Grey Tide Eel:** Wonderful suggestion.

**Holly Daze:** Vacations.

**Jogger Fee:** These students require many colouring pencils.

**Lass Cheer:** 1999

**Sam Witch:** Filling between two pieces of bread, such as Cheese and Tomato.

**Sanes Breeze:** Large supermarket on Whiteladies Road.

**Sentry:** 100 years.

**Wife Runts:** As opposed to Boxer Shorts.

## CAPTION COMPETITION

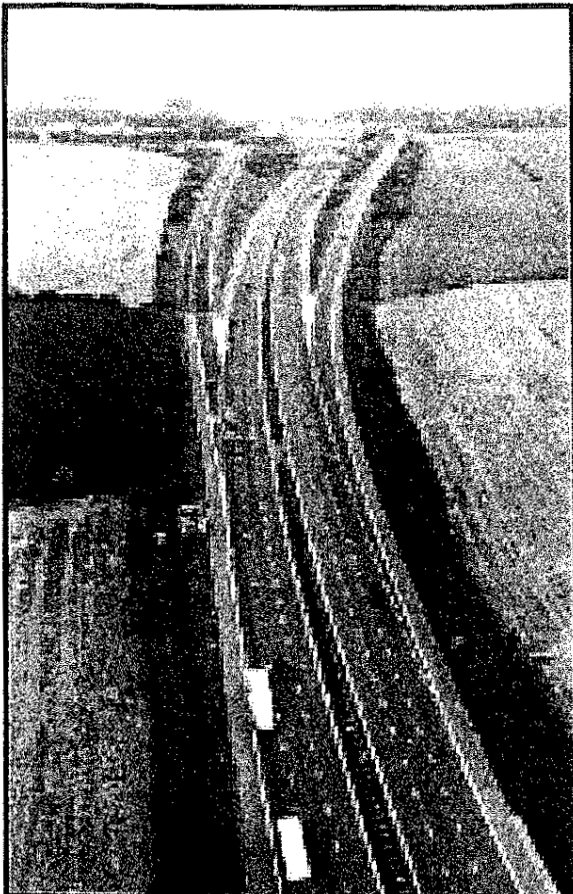
### WIN AN EXCITING PRIZE

The espionage division of BUHABS, 'Special Retrieval', has been working hard over the summer to aquire the attached photograph. Unfortunately we are unable to reveal the location where the picture was taken, the identity of the young person framed within, or exactly what they're doing.

However, we think it's rather amusing and would like you to think up a caption to go with it. Just write it in the space below or jot it on a bit of paper and bring it along to the first social on Wednesday 18 October. The best will win a prize.

YOUR NAME -





Flying over the M5, Jcn 18



Today's crew sat on the envelope

## FLIGHT REVIEW

*Western Region Balloon Meet*

*Monday 05 June 2000*

*20:00 - 21:15 (1hr 15mins)*

*Pilots: Paul Spellward & Simon Jenkins*

This was an exhilarating flight toward the end of last term. For most of us it was a welcome break from revision during the exam period.

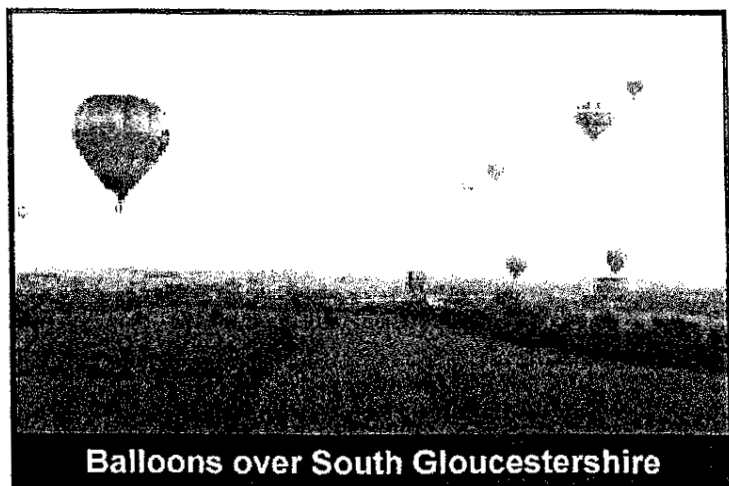
We flew with about seventeen Balloons from Badminton, in a totally different wind direction than was predicted. Sights during the flight included, Lygrove Hall, the picturesque Tormarton, the M5 motorway, and a bizarre tractor, as well as spotting lots of wildlife in the quiet fields.

We landed near Dyrham Park, just in time for us to be caught in a huge deluge of rain. Luckily we were by the main road, which made retrieval easy.

John Burnett



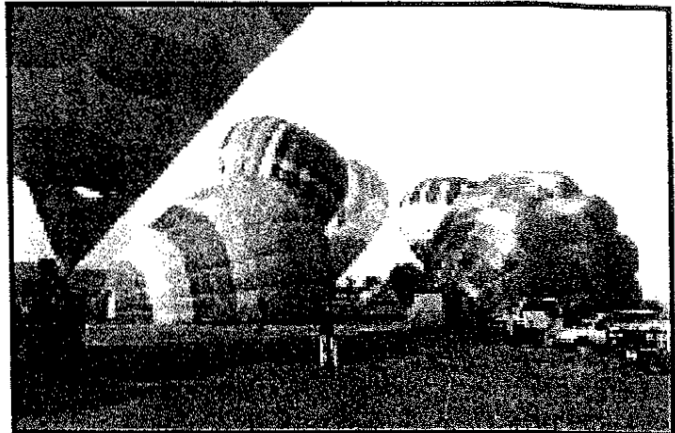
Evening Post inflates next to us



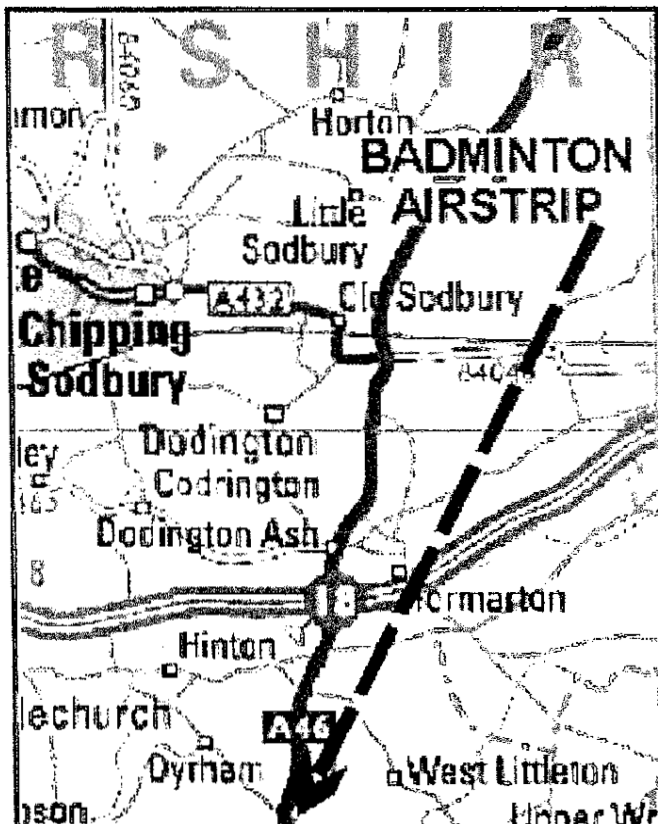
Balloons over South Gloucestershire



**Spreading the envelope**



**The Balloons during inflation**



**Map of flight path (NOT TO SCALE)**



**B5 soon after takeoff**



**Mr. Jenkins under pilot training**



**Just landed, in rain!**



## BALLOONING WITH BUHABS

The rest of this issue is dedicated to the technicalities of going on a trip with BUHABS. It is intended to be informative for new members and a reminder for existing ones. On this page are some general points, and on the next how to sign up. Pages 10 and 11 include some frequently asked questions. The back page is a checklist which might be useful if kept. Please read all the information carefully. Please do not hesitate to e-mail the committee with any further questions.

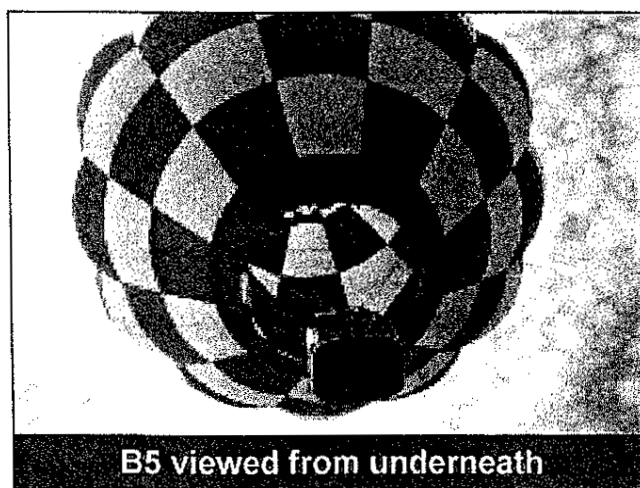
So, you have handed over your thirty pounds, and in return have become a member of the U.K.'s most active balloon club. You are eager to get airborne, but you may have a few concerns. First you might think, "Jeepers, what if I am the only new member there, I will look like such a Wally", or words to that effect. Be reassured that there are usually a number of new members on most flights. Nobody expects you to be perfect at crewing, as the outing progresses you will learn about all the jobs that need to be done.

You may also be concerned about safety. Were you aware that ballooning is the safest form of aviation, and that BUHABS has an excellent safety record? All BUHABS pilots are fully qualified, after rigorous training from some of the country's most experienced pilots. We only fly in good weather conditions and will not fly if conditions are 'marginal'; for this reason you might see other balloonists flying when BUHABS flights are cancelled. Passenger safety is our number one priority.

The first thing you must remember about ballooning is that it is totally weather dependent. Be prepared to be disappointed, you may have to try a few times before you actually get to go out.

Information on how to sign up for trips is on the next page. On each trip the pilot and four people fly, and the driver and two others retrieve. On the sign up list you will see a drivers slot for approved drivers only, who know who they are.

Only those that fly have to pay the £12 contribution toward fuel costs, including the pilot. This money is just for fuel, we make no profits. It is considerably cheap compared with a commercial flight, which would be about £130. A record is kept of who flies and 'crewing points' are allocated. You gain one point for crewing and lose one when you fly, therefore selection for who to fly on a particular trip is based on who has the highest crewing points. This way it remains fair. If everyone is on equal points, a draw will take place.



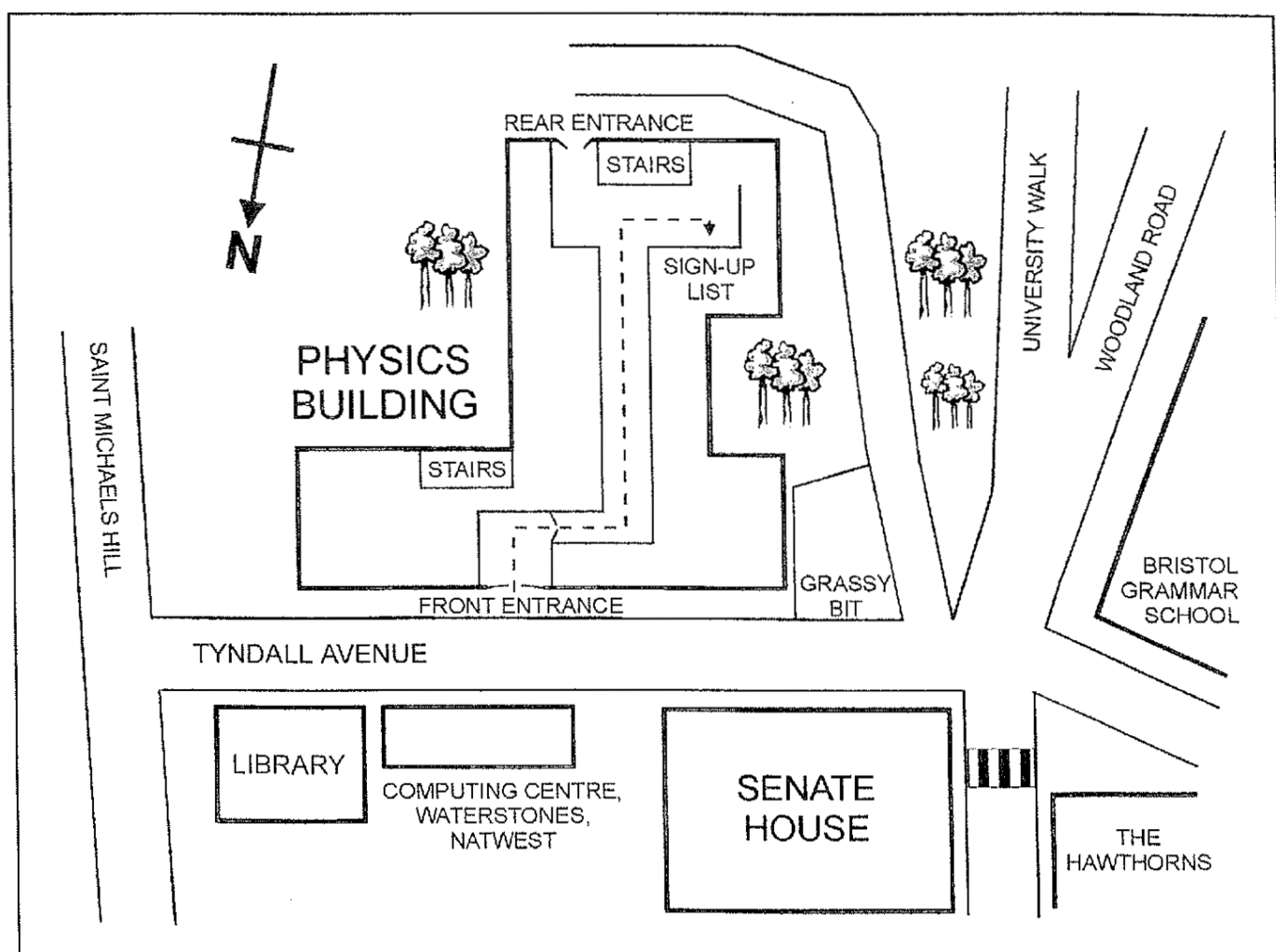
On the day remember to 'phone in, failure to do so will result in minus two crewing points. Trips usually last about four hours, and wear suitable clothes as retrieval may be muddy. It is traditional to celebrate a first flight with champagne, a tradition we encourage, so by all means bring along some bubbly! Also, don't forget your £12, because it is likely you will be chosen to fly!

## 'PHONING IN & DIRECTIONS TO SIGN UP

Signing up lists are placed on the student societies notice board (see map) in the H. H. WILLS PHYSICS BUILDING. They are placed every week for 24 hours at the following time;

**THURSDAY 1:15 PM - FRIDAY 1:15 PM**

The Physics Building is situated on Tyndall Avenue opposite the Computing Centre, Waterstones and the Arts & Social Sciences library. There are four slots of which you may sign up for one. If there are still spaces in certain slots on Friday you may sign up for another space. On the signing up list you will find all the details of who you need to 'phone and at what time. Ballooning requires calm conditions and for this reason we only fly in the morning and evening. Therefore 'phone in times will reflect this. Typically in October, 'phoning in times will be approximately 0730 and 1600. They do get later and earlier though as winter approaches, so it is vital you know who to call and at what time for the slot you have signed up for. Those who do not live in the main University area, please refer to the next pages.



**You MUST 'phone in at the time you have signed up for on the notice board, EVEN if you think the weather is bad (who knows, the pilot may have other ideas!). Failure to call will result in a loss of two crewing points and may render you very unpopular if a flight has to be cancelled through lack of crew. You will be told where to meet to go flying when you 'phone in.**